basin transfer of water from surplus basins to deficit basins/areas which comprises of two components, namely, Himalayan Rivers Development Component and Peninsular Rivers Development Component. National Water Development Agency (NWDA) was set up under the MOWR in 1982 for carrying out various technical studies to establish the feasibility of the proposals of NPP and to give concrete shape to it. Based on various studies conducted, NWDA has identified 30 links (16 links under Peninsular Component and 14 links under Himalayan Component) for preparing Feasibility Reports (FRs.) NWDA has completed feasibility reports for 14 links under Peninsular Rivers Development Component and two links under Himalayan Rivers Development Component. A tripartite agreement was signed among Government of India and concerned States of Madhya Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh on 25.08.2005 in respect of one priority link under Peninsular Component *Viz.* Ken-Betwa link for preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR).

The time for implementation of inter-linking of rivers (ILR) programme depends upon the consensus & cooperation of the concerned States.

Irrigation projects in Tamil Nadu

2393. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of works pertaining to irrigation are lying incomplete in many States particularly in Tamil Nadu due to non-availability of requisite financial assistance;

(b) if so, the details of pending irrigation projects along with escalation cost thereof;

(c) whether any special financial assistance is being provided to these States for completion of these projects on priority basis; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) and (b) Irrigation is a State subject and the planning, execution, funding, operation and maintenance of irrigation projects are primarily the responsibility of the State Governments based on their priorities. Though, financial crunch of the State Governments is cited as the main reason for delay In the completion of irrigation projects, there are other constraints

also such as resettlement & rehabilitation problems, land acquisition problems, contractual problems, court litigations etc. which hamper the progress of irrigation projects. As on 1st March, 2006 there are 158 major and 212 medium ongoing irrigation projects, including 2 medium irrigation projects in Tamil Nadu, which have spilled over from the Ninth Five Year Plan to Tenth Five Year Plan with a balance cost of the order of Rs. 90,514 crore (as on 1.4.2004).

(c) and (d) The Central Government is providing Central Loan Assistance (CLA) under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) for such approved irrigation projects which are in an advanced stage of construction and beyond resources capability of the States that can be completed in the next four financial years as per the guidelines of the Programme. An amount of Rs. 18.387 crore has been released under AIBP as CLA/grant upto February, 2006 for 191 major/medium irrigation projects and 4472 surface water minor irrigation schemes. With the assistance provided, 49 major/medium irrigation projects and 3179 surface water miner irrigation schemes have been reported as completed.

Diversion of funds released as central loan assistance under AIBP

2394. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fast track projects introduced in 2002 for focussing on completion of selected projects within one year has failed to have the desired impact as none of the 29 projects of the fast track were completed despite spending Rs. 12,823 crores during 1996—2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there have been cases of diversion/mis-utilization of funds released as CLA under AIBP; and

(d) if so, how much funds were diverted and what action has been taken against the guilty people?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) and (b) Irrigation is a State subject and the planning, execution, funding, operation and maintenance of irrigation projects are primarily the responsibility of the State Governments based on their priorities. The main objective of introducing Fast Track Programme under Accelerated Irrigation